

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING PEBBLEBROOK HIGH SCHOOL

HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an exceptional high school choir in my district, Pebblebrook High School Performing Arts Chamber Choir of Mabelton, Georgia, which has been chosen to perform at New York City's legendary Carnegie Hall on March 20, 2009.

Pebblebrook High School Performing Arts Chamber Choir was selected out of dozens of high school choirs across the country for this performance. The concert will feature 200 students from four states, and is the capstone of Carnegie Hall's yearlong National High School Choral Festival. The concert will be conducted by Dr. Craig Jessop, esteemed Director of the Utah State University Music Department and former director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, who has been working with the choirs and their conductors throughout the year. Apart from their world-renowned performances, Carnegie Hall brings innovative music education programs to students across the nation. I am delighted that these young constituents have been given this opportunity.

Led by George Case, the Pebblebrook High School Performing Arts Chamber Choir performs works from all periods of classical music with a strong emphasis on 20th- and 21st-century compositions with a focus on choral/orchestral masterworks. The Choir has shared the stage with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Cobb Symphony Orchestra, and has entered numerous competitions and adjudications at which they have consistently received superior ratings and awards. Choir members are actively involved in extracurricular performances and are given the opportunity to work with top professionals in the arts from the Atlanta area and throughout the United States.

I am honored to have one of the four schools in the nation chosen for the Carnegie Hall National High School Choral Festival residing in my Georgia district. They should be proud not only of their musical achievement, but their embodiment of the quality musical education the State of Georgia provides. I commend these students and their leaders for their success, and wish them the best of luck on March 20 when they perform at Carnegie Hall.

IN HONOR OF JUSTICE SEAN
RYAN; SUPREME COURT JUDGE
OF IRELAND

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Justice Sean Ryan, High Court and Supreme Court Judge

of Ireland, as I welcome him to Cleveland, Ohio on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2009.

For the past thirty years, attorneys Tim Collins and Thomas Scanlon have organized the St. Patrick's Day Party and Parade—a joyous event that brings people together in the heart of Cleveland. This treasured event promotes and preserves the rich traditions of their beloved Irish homeland. As in years past, downtown Cleveland will once again spring to life as a sea of green and the spirited sound of drums and bagpipes wind their way along Euclid Avenue. This enchanted day promises old friendships renewed, the discovery of new ones, and the spirit of all those joining together to celebrate Irish culture.

Justice Sean Ryan studied in Dublin at University College and at Dublin & King University where he studied law. After being called to the Bar in 1972, Justice Ryan practiced as junior counsel in the South Eastern Circuit of Ireland until 1983, when he was appointed to Senior Counsel. For the next twenty years, Justice Ryan worked diligently in Ireland's High Court and Supreme Court on a wide range of cases and issues, including constitutional law, law of torts, criminal law and administrative law. Since 2001, Justice Ryan has focused his energy and expertise on investigating cases of child abuse and working as an advocate for victims of child abuse.

Madam Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Justice Sean Ryan, as we welcome him to Cleveland on St. Patrick's Day. Please also join me in recognition of Tim Collins and Thomas Scanlon for organizing this wondrous St. Patrick's Day Celebration again this year, as they have for the past thirty years. “Ni dheanfaidh smaoineamh an treabhadh duit—You'll never plough a field by turning it over in your mind” Old Irish Proverb.

A TRIBUTE TO TRACYE RAWLS- MARTIN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Tracye Rawls-Martin, proud daughter of Henry Sr. and Shirley M. Rawls, wife of Arnold V “Woody” Martin, stepmother to Brittney D. Clarence and “Nana T” to Woody's oldest daughters' son, Charles Lovell 3rd.

Tracye Rawls-Martin, MS ATC is a Certified Athletic Trainer and one of 5 African American Athletic Training Education Program Directors in the United States. She is “mother”, advisor and professor to more than 16 Athletic Training Students within the BS/MS Degree Program in Athletic Training & Sports Sciences at Long Island University Brooklyn Campus. She began her academic career as a Dance Education major and progressed to a Pre-Physical Therapy major and fell in love with an Athletic

Training major. After completing two semesters in the Pre-Physical Therapy program at Kingsborough Community College, she decided it was time to move on to a more exciting and productive field—the field of Athletic Training and Sports Sciences. The field of Athletic Trainers was made for her because it is designed for Health Care Professionals who specialize in prevention, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries and illnesses that occur to athletes and the physically active. All Certified Athletic Trainers must have at least a bachelor's degree in athletic training, which is an allied health profession, must pass a comprehensive exam before earning the ATC credential, must keep knowledge and skills current by participating in continuing education and must adhere to standards of professional practice set by a national certifying agency.

The combination of dance education & athletic performance was a winning combination for her personality because she loves helping people, teaching, watching and participating in sports. In addition to nurturing her students through academic requirements for the program, she has had the honor and privilege of working with over 1000 athletes worldwide; high school, junior college, division one collegiate athletes, semi professional and professional. Her current responsibilities as Director of Athletic Training Education Programs at Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus include teaching (18 credit hours teaching a variety of sports medicine topics which include risk management, injury prevention, orthopedic examination & diagnosis, medical conditions and disabilities, acute care of injuries and illnesses, therapeutic modalities, conditioning, rehabilitation exercise and pharmacology, psychosocial intervention and referral, nutritional aspect of injuries and illnesses and health care administration), administrative (direct and administer BS/MS Degree Program and Advanced Master's Degree program in Athletic Training and Sports Sciences, maintain guidelines and standards set forth by the accrediting agency, work with the Clinical Coordinator to establish and maintain affiliations, conduct and publish research/scholarly activities in areas of expertise, advise students, develop and implement internal/external marketing strategies for the Athletic Training Education Programs, assist in the recruitment of faculty, continue to encourage good citizenship and professional conduct among all students and faculty so as to promote the best interest of athletic trainers, maintain continuing education credits, participate/coordinate and conduct committees within the Division, School of Health Professions, the University and the Brooklyn Committee), service (active member with the local, regional and national athletic training organizations, Athletic Training Students Club/Members and Faculty noted on national website, Instructor for American Heart Association, Book reviewer for Lippincott Williams and Wilkin publishing company, participant in several health events for children, i.e. TEAM L.I.U.-Teenagers Educated About Asthma Management).

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

In addition, Tracye Rawls-Martin is an entrepreneur and a top executive for one of the world's largest direct selling telecommunications providers. On a part time basis she has reached the first earned executive position in the company. She is well on her way to helping hundreds and thousands of individuals achieve financial freedom and continue to live out their life long dreams whether it be to have more time with their families or to explore the beaches of the world.

Tracye will continue to pursue her passions and would like to contribute her success to the Lord, her family and her students. She will not rest until she has fulfilled her life's long mission—to take care of children of all ages, to feed them, clothe them, teach them and love them; in the end to develop a place they can call home and a place they can always return to a "University for Children."

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF DETECTIVE LESTER J. NERI

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant in Chester County, Pennsylvania, who has retired after 33 years of loyal service in law enforcement.

Detective Lester J. Neri started his career in 1975 with the Springfield Township Police Department and faithfully served the Tredyffrin Township Police Department for the last 27 years.

Detective Neri earned the respect of fellow officers and supervisors with his outstanding leadership and analytical skills over the course of his distinguished career.

He has been a tremendous asset to the department due to his wide range of skills, including crisis negotiations, homicide investigations, undercover investigative techniques and fingerprint processing.

Despite retiring in December, Detective Neri continues to serve the 42,000 men and women who pin on a badge each day in his position as State President of the Pennsylvania Fraternal Order of Police.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in praising the outstanding service and dedication of Detective Lester J. Neri, and all those who take an oath to serve and protect their communities.

TRIBUTE TO THE GERMANTOWN BULLDOGS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a championship team from Germantown, Illinois.

The Germantown Bulldogs beat Mt. Vernon-St. Mary 35–32 to clinch the 2009 Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association Class S state championship. The Bulldogs brought home the trophy after finishing the season with a stellar 28–1 record.

To win the title, the Bulldogs built an early lead, then had to hold off an intense second-half rally, but they showed poise under pressure, and held on to get the win.

I want to congratulate Coach Gerard Alpers and his assistant coach, Jeff Lampe, on their fine work with this group of student athletes. I also want to extend my congratulations to the members of the 2008–2009 Germantown Bulldogs state championship boys basketball team: Seth Haake, Nick Hitpas, Jalen Albers, Drew Foppe, Grant Haake, Kevin Haar, Kyle Kohnen, Brandon Becker, Mitchell Langenhorst, Christian Kohnen, Kyler Scheer, Jordan Lampe and Travis Wuebbels.

This outstanding group of young men represented themselves, their school, families and community in a first-rate fashion. It is my privilege to congratulate them on a job well done.

RECOGNIZING PLIGHT OF TIBETAN PEOPLE ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DALAI LAMA'S EXILE

SPEECH OF

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, one year ago, a wave of protests began in Lhasa and swept across the Tibetan Plateau. In the time since, the Chinese government has pursued policies that demonstrate a failure to live up to its commitments to its ethnic minority citizens—commitments that are well-documented and unmistakable. Chinese law includes protections for the distinctive culture, language and identity of ethnic minority citizens. China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, for example, guarantees ethnic minorities the "right to administer their internal affairs." Specifically, the term "regional ethnic autonomy," as the law itself defines it, "reflects the state's full respect for ethnic minorities' right to administer their internal affairs." Over the past year, the actions of the Chinese government have reflected neither "the state's full respect" of ethnic minority rights, nor of human rights standards recognized in both Chinese and international law.

On January 19, 2009, the People's Congress of the Tibet Autonomous Region established a new holiday called "Serfs' Emancipation Day." As the Congressional-Executive Commission on China has reported, this new holiday commemorates the March 28, 1959, Chinese government decree that dissolved the Dalai Lama's Lhasa-based Tibetan government. The Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress said the new holiday would "strengthen Tibetans' patriotism." He also said that officials had met to "ensure that all people mark the occasion with festivities." Chinese officials have required Tibetans to celebrate the end of the Dalai Lama's government, and, by implication, his departure from Tibet fifty years ago. This is how the Chinese government demonstrates its commitment to "the state's full respect for ethnic minorities' right to administer their internal affairs."

For the last several weeks, international media organizations have reported that Chinese authorities have been closing Tibetan

areas to foreign reporters and travelers. Last month, China's Central Propaganda Bureau and State Ethnic Affairs Commission publicized a document titled "An Outline Concerning Propaganda Education on the Party and State's Ethnic Policy." As the Congressional-Executive Commission on China has reported, this document calls for resisting "international hostile forces raising the banner of such things as 'ethnicity,' 'religion,' and 'human rights' to carry out westernization and separatist activities toward our country." Let us be absolutely clear: Tibetan grievances exist not as a result of foreign influence. Tibetan grievances exist for one reason and one reason only: in spite of what the Chinese government has written in its laws, in practice it has created an ethnic autonomy system that denies fundamental rights to ethnic minorities. This could not be clearer than it has become over the last year.

The time for change is now. I repeat today what I stated in this chamber nearly one year ago: protest activity that results in the destruction of property or death of anyone, whether Tibetan or non-Tibetan, is unacceptable in any context. But the harshness with which the Chinese government has handled affairs over the last year across the Tibetan plateau and in other ethnic minority regions of China—harshness that Chinese officials have sought to justify as being necessary to preserve stability—has revealed instead a level of hostility toward China's ethnic minority citizens not seen in decades, and has heightened fears for Tibetans, Uyghurs, and other ethnic minority peoples in China.

The Congressional-Executive Commission on China has tracked policies that undercut protections for ethnic minority languages that are stipulated in Chinese law. Measures to promote Mandarin-focused "bilingual" education in schools in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, for example, have resulted in language requirements that disadvantage ethnic minority teachers. These and other job hiring and labor practices are part of a broader set of policies that restrict ethnic minority rights, and that illustrate the Chinese government's failure to abide by commitments as set forth in China's own Constitution and laws. Article 4 of the Chinese Constitution and Article 9 of China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, for example, both forbid discrimination based on ethnicity. Article 12 of China's Labor Law and Article 3 of China's new Employment Promotion Law state that job applicants shall not face discrimination in job hiring based on factors including ethnicity, and Article 28 of China's new Employment Contract Law states that all ethnicities enjoy equal labor rights.

The Chinese government seems to protect some aspects of ethnic minority rights in communities that are not perceived to challenge state policies. But shortcomings in both the substance and the implementation of Chinese policies toward ethnic minorities prevent ethnic minority citizens from fully enjoying the rights that the Chinese government itself plainly and openly has said are guaranteed under China's own laws, and under international legal standards. A wide range of public policy areas today present challenges that are pressing and real, but concerns in other policy areas do not eclipse the Chinese government's abuses of law and its ongoing violations of the fundamental rights of Tibetans, Uyghurs and other ethnic minority citizens of China, and of Han Chinese citizens as well.

I would urge all of my colleagues to take full advantage of the resources available to the public on the web site of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China—www.cecc.gov—and to make use of the Commission's analysis of developments as they unfold in Tibetan areas, and across China. The Commission monitors and reports continuously on human rights and the rule of law in China, and I encourage all to check the Commission's web site regularly for updates, to subscribe to the on-line newsletter, and to rely on the Commission's published reports to keep up with developments in China.

Finally, the resolution of Tibetan grievances can occur only with direct talks between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama. As China plays an increasingly important role in the international community, other countries will appropriately assess China's fulfillment of the commitments it has made in both Chinese and international law, including legal and constitutional commitments to ethnic minorities. The international spotlight remains on China. We hope that the Chinese government will welcome such attention with a full commitment to openness, and to the implementation of basic human rights.

YEAR OF THE MILITARY FAMILY

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN HEINRICH

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in full support of making 2009 the Year of the Military Family.

It is an honor to support this measure and to express my heartfelt appreciation, and that of our entire congressional district, for the families of our men and women who serve in the military.

For so many New Mexican families, military service has been in our blood for generations.

Our state has often had the highest rate of military volunteerism in the country and the 1st congressional district is home to countless veterans, not to mention the large number of proud service members stationed at Kirtland Air Force Base.

Yet we know all too well that with each individual who generously gives their service to their country through our military, there is a significant impact on those closest to them.

Each time a service member leaves home, they leave behind caring husbands and wives, loving sons and daughters, worried parents and whole communities that remain concerned for their safety.

There is no question that these affected families are also serving our country—by courageously enduring long separations from loved ones and the demands of deployments abroad.

So today, I proudly honor the commitment, sacrifice, courage and steadfast support that have been provided by our country's military families, allowing our service members to serve and I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

TRIBUTE TO BILL GHENT, INC.

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a community institution in Harrisburg, Illinois, celebrating its 100th birthday.

Bill Ghent, Inc. began business in 1909 as J.C. Robertson, and boasted as its slogan, "Friends may sympathize, but we pay cash." Bill Ghent joined the business in the late 1930s, and in 1957, Bill Ghent, Inc. was established. In the early days, the only worries this small-town insurance agency was concerned with were fire and lightning. "Now, we've got all kinds of perils to deal with," Bill Ghent, II, told the local newspaper.

These days, Bill Ghent, Inc. insures not just private citizens and their property, but also looks after the schools of the area. Insuring schools is something of a tradition for Bill Ghent, Inc. In Mr. Ghent's office, behind glass, is the 1909 to 1911 policy for the Bramlet School in Raleigh, Illinois. It insured the school building for \$500 and the contents for \$100.

Bill Ghent, Inc. has served the residents of Harrisburg and southeastern Illinois from the days of horse and buggies to today's modern world. I want to congratulate Bill Ghent and all the employees of Bill Ghent, Inc. on one hundred years of service to the community, and to wish them one hundred more.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT BRIAN SCHAR

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, Albert Caswell is one of the finest tour guides in the United States Capitol Guide Service. But what many may not know about Albert is that he is also a gifted poet.

Oftentimes, when I run into Albert in the Capitol, he shares his work with me. Recently, he gave me a poem about a man from my District in East Tennessee, Sergeant Brian Schar.

Sergeant Schar served our Nation valiantly during the War on Terror, and in doing so made a sacrifice only few could imagine.

Albert's poem is a tribute to Sergeant Schar's courage and strength as he adjusts to life as a double amputee. While we often hear on the news of the lives lost in the War, we also need reminding of the thousands more who suffered life-altering injuries.

Madam Speaker, I would like to call Albert's poem to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD, and I pray many will be inspired by his words.

Everyday, magnificent men and women like SSG Schar go off to war and leave their loved ones behind. All for the greater good, putting themselves last while putting their nation first. Many lie in graves as the ultimate sacrifice. While, others like Brian . . .

must come home and fight another battle. While all the time teaching and inspiring us, with their undying faith and courage to inspire us.

ONE THING . . . FOR SCHAR

Throughout the course of our nation's history . . .

There have come so many fine patriots who have blessed her so indeed . . .

And many all from this great state of Tennessee . . .

Men like Crockett all in their glory . . .

And Sargent York, all the more he . . .

Who, fought and died . . . all so we could be free . . . their story . . .

Men, who went straight into that face of hell . . .

With hearts of courage full, which swelled . . .

Who all in that moment of truth . . .

Have so showed us the proof . . .

That on this earth, angers dwell . . .

For there have been so many Tennesseans, such fine lives would create . . .

Men who have so blessed our nation, and this their state . . .

But, One Thing For Schar . . .

The Tallest of All Tennessean's by far . . .

Are but men like this young star . . .

Men who so bravely lived and died . . .

Who come home without arms and legs . . .

And don't ask why? . . .

For they have a higher calling . . .

As they wipe those tears from their eyes . . .

For he won't moan and he won't beg . . .

As a new war he must wage . . .

As on this day he stands taller, than any other man with legs . . .

As he must go through hell and back, all so you can say . . .

I am free this day . . .

As one of The Tallest of Tennessean's, he now stands . . .

As it's his heart that which now so commands . . .

Teaching us . . .

Reaching us . . .

Into your our very souls to make us understand . . .

Why we are free, and how beautiful a heart can be . . .

Blessing us all, you and me . . .

As the high cost of freedom we so see . . .

As from his heart he speaks!

Saying, I will not be stopped . . .

I will not be slowed . . .

As a force of nature, as onward he goes . . .

As his fine heart climbs mountains tops . . .

And if I ever have a son . . .

I but hope and pray that he could but be like this fine one . . .

But, one thing I ask . . .

One, Thing . . . For Schar . . .

As you go home this night . . .

Holding, your family warm and tight . . .

As all in your world, all seems so right . . .

Remember, the great price of freedom paid . . .

Get down on your knee's . . .

And thank this young man so brave . . .

And all of his brothers and sisters in arms, who now so lie in soft quiet graves!

Just, One Thing For Schar . . .

ALBERT CAREY CASWELL ©, 2009

FAOY This poem is dedicated to a real American Hero Brian Schar . . . he was injured on September 9th 2007 in an IED blast . . . SSG Brian Schar of A. Co. 9th Eng 1st ID The United States Army . . . Brian is a Combat Engineer from Sevierville Tennessee.

TRIBUTE TO KENT OLSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PROFESSIONAL INSURANCE AGENTS OF NORTH DAKOTA

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the distinguished career of Kent Olson. I am pleased to have known Kent Olson for the many years he served as the Executive Director of the Professional Insurance Agents of North Dakota working with him on important insurance issues for North Dakota farmers.

Kent Olson is a model of the highest standards of honesty, integrity and professionalism. As Mr. Olson prepares to begin retirement, I want to pay tribute to his leadership of the professional insurance agents in North Dakota focusing on the importance of quality continuing education for its members that translated into excellent service for families and farmers in North Dakota. Throughout the years, quality education for professional insurance agents has been known by one name: Kent Olson.

Among his many achievements, Kent Olson is an expert in crop insurance and has been passionate in support of the key role that crop insurance plays in the farming economy of our state and of our entire nation.

In addition to his work in our state, Kent has contributed his many talents to the national PIA agents association, putting on seminars and getting personally involved every year. His involvement typifies his belief in our democracy and embodies the motto of PIA as being, "Local Agents Serving Main Street America." Kent believes passionately in the value that local professional insurance agents always provide. And with equal passion, he believes that insurance should continue to be regulated by the State, not by the federal government.

I am pleased to note that although Kent will be retiring, he will never give up his passion—whether they are for the Main Street insurance agents, who have come to call him a close friend, or for his family, or for his music.

Kent Olson is one of those people whom everyone respects, and with many good reasons. I have had the pleasure of calling Kent Olson a colleague and a friend, and that will never change.

I am pleased to congratulate and commend Kent Olson on the occasion of his retirement as executive director of the Professional Insurance Agents of North Dakota.

RECOGNIZING AT&T FOR JOBS CREATION AND COMMITMENT TO CLEAN ENERGY

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, in this time of economic uncertainty, I rise to thank one company who is actively working to create new jobs and practice a clean, environmentally friendly business model, AT&T.

Through a new \$18 billion initiative, AT&T is pledging to increase its broadband capacity.

Not only will this initiative increase Internet speed and accessibility for customers, but perhaps more importantly it will create 3,000 new jobs.

Over the next ten years, AT&T also plans to create or save an additional one thousand jobs through a plan to invest \$565 million in replacing its current fleet of vehicles with 15,000 domestically manufactured Compressed Natural Gas and alternative fuel vehicles.

Research shows that this new fleet will save 49 million gallons of gasoline over the next ten years. It also will reduce carbon emissions by 211,000 metric tons in this same time frame.

Madam Speaker, I applaud AT&T for its initiative in taking the lead in the movement to green our economy. Not only will these new initiatives help lead our nation out of its current economic downturn, but they also help to create an environmentally sustainable future for our children and grandchildren to enjoy. These actions set AT&T apart as an exemplary company, and I hope that others will soon follow their lead.

TRIBUTE TO THE OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize my fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated, the first African-American national fraternal organization to be founded at a historically black college, for their 7th Annual Florida Political Summit in Tallahassee, Florida.

For nearly 100 years, my fraternal brothers have faithfully carried out their mission of fostering the growth of men, both college and post college, by providing an outlet and opportunity to serve the community as set forth by our founders at Howard University, Edgar A. Love, Oscar J. Cooper, Frank Coleman, and Ernest Just.

Since its inception in 1911, Omega Psi Phi brothers have been advocates of taking leadership to prevent violence against women and children in the African-American community, supported efforts of the United Negro College Fund and the Congressional Black Caucus, and most recently partnered with the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches in Coaches vs. Cancer in empowering basketball coaches, their teams and local communities to make a difference in the fight against cancer.

While attending Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, FAMU, in Tallahassee, Florida, I had the distinct honor of serving as Basileus of the Upsilon Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi. My experiences as Basileus have served as the cornerstone in my education and leadership skills that I have carried over into this esteemed Chamber in representing the 17th Congressional District of Florida.

In an esteemed effort to continue Omega Psi Phi's mission, I know the men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity will discuss their legislative concerns ranging from civil rights, health care reform and veteran's affairs to public education, foreign policy, and economic issues while sharing their experiences and raising awareness of issues affecting our daily lives.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in wishing my brothers of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity a successful political summit as these men continue to build a strong and effective force of men dedicated to its Cardinal Principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF MUSIC IMPRESARIO RALPH MERCADO

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise to ask my colleagues to pause and remember the life of a good friend, Ralph Mercado, the legendary Latin music executive who recently passed away on March 10, 2009. As much an icon as the musicians that he worked with and promoted, Mercado was a visionary innovator who helped popularize tropical music worldwide, including New York's mixture of popular Latin rhythms know as "salsa."

Mercado etched his name in the history books by building a record label whose various components (from a publishing company to a video and film production arm) helped make and take salsa to some of the largest stages around the world. A catalog of award-winning international hits across three decades transformed the Latino music industry, bringing respect not only to talented artists but also providing young Latinos with a way to connect with their parents, their roots and their communities.

It all started in Brooklyn on Sept. 29, 1941. The son of a Dominican dockworker and a Puerto Rican factory worker, Mercado often commented that he learned merengue, the typical dance from the Dominican Republic, in the hallway of the family's fifth-floor walkup as soon as he could walk. He first fell in love with the rhythms while at the Palladium Nightclub when he was only 16, watching the big bands of Machito, Tito Puente and Tito Rodriguez. As a teenager, he was famed for producing "waistline parties" in apartment building basements where a couple's admission was a penny per inch of their dates' waistline.

Using the same concept, he then opened the 3 & 1 Club where he began booking local Latin bands such as Eddie Palmieri and Richie Ray & Bobby Cruz, among many others. This led to Mercado's first management, booking, and promotions company called Showstoppers. He promoted legendary R&B acts that included James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight & the Pips, the Stylistics, the Chi-lites, starting a salsa-soul music trend.

Mercado also continued to open many doors to up and coming artists. He helped to expand the Fania All-Stars, promoted dances at the Cheetah Nightclub, and presented Latin jazz at the Red Garter and, later, at the Village Gate and other downtown venues. His partnership with Jack Hooke, the late Tito Puente's longtime manager, helped create the Salsa Meets Jazz Series at the Village Gate and the Latin Jazz Jam as part of the JVC Jazz Festival.

A great judge of talent, Mercado opened RMM Management in 1972 representing Eddie

Palmieri and Ray Barretto. He went on to manage virtually every name in the industry, including its two biggest stars: Tito Puente and Celia Cruz. His concerts grew more popular and by 1987 the wildly successful "Latin Tinge" nights at the Palladium on New York's 14th Street were bringing 3,000 "salseros" to dance every Thursday night. Mercado managed these events until 1992, when he refocused his energies on the creation of a record label, RMM.

Mercado expanded his venture into numerous companies including RMM Records, RMM Filmworks, and two publishing houses. With over 140 artists signed to RMM Records, the label sold millions of recordings a year. The recipient of countless awards and proclamations, Ralph Mercado was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Tribute by Billboard Magazine in 1999.

Always an innovator, Ralph Mercado pioneered the presentation of salsa music in Africa, South America, Asia, and Israel. He was one of the first to bring Latin music concerts to such prestigious venues as Radio City Music Hall with Julio Iglesias' New York performance; Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall; the Beacon Theater; and Madison Square Garden.

The truth of course is that Mercado's death this week leaves a tremendous void in the hearts of not just his family and friends but also countless Latin music fans around the world. However, his body of personal and professional work leaves a distinguished legacy whose impact can be seen not just in the industry he helped create, but also in the countless lives that his music touched. Little boys and girls can dream of singing the songs that their parents know and love thanks to Ralph's extraordinary commitment, energy and discipline.

So Madam Speaker, rather than mourn his passing, I hope that my colleagues will join me in celebrating the life of Ralph Mercado, Jr. His is an inspirational story for all Americans, one that exemplified greatness in every single way.

HONORING MAYELA ROSALES

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an exceptional businesswoman, journalist and community activist from Naples, Florida, Mayela Rosales. As Executive Vice President of Azteca America SWFL and host of the most popular Spanish language TV show in Southwest Florida, D'Latinos al Dia, Mrs. Rosales is an example of what can be achieved through hard work and dedication.

With a degree in Journalism and Communications from the University of Zulia in her native country of Venezuela and 12 years of experience in the field, she came to the U.S. 13 years ago. Since then, she has worked towards ensuring that the fast-growing Hispanic community in Southwest Florida has access to news and information through Spanish language television programming and print. In 2003, Media Vista Group, the company she owned, integrated with Media Vista Publica-

tions and now produces the D'Latinos Magazine, D'Latinos online and D'Latinos al Dia program. Mrs. Rosales is Executive Director of the monthly magazine and host of the television show, which has been the only live, Spanish language program in the area for six years and airs every weekday in more than 400,000 homes.

In 2006, Mrs. Rosales, in partnership with her husband Orlando Rosales and others, acquired local TV station WTPH 14 Azteca America Southwest Florida in Naples. The station serves as a venue for Spanish language programming and news including D'Latinos al Dia.

In addition to her business ventures and career in journalism, Mrs. Rosales is a dedicated wife to husband Orlando and mother of two boys, Gabriel and Daniel. She is also active in a number of civic and charitable organizations including the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce, the Children's Museum of Naples, the American Heart Association, the Fifth Third Bank, the Ronald McDonald House, Hospice of Naples, Catholic Charities and Literacy Volunteers, and was the founder of the Council for Hispanic Business Professionals.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, I ask you to join me in congratulating my dear friend Mayela Rosales for her invaluable contributions to the Hispanic community and her dedication to professionalism and communicating accurate and valuable information to residents of Southwest Florida.

TRIBUTE TO THE BARTELSON BRAVES

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding group of student athletes from Bartelso, Illinois.

The Bartelso Braves of Bartelso Elementary School, defeated Centralia Trinity Lutheran 49-26 to capture the Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association Class S State Championship. The win followed victories in the quarterfinals over Rome and in the semifinals over Waltonville.

I want to congratulate Coach Gigi Kohrmann and Assistant Coach Abby Winkler for all of their work with their team. I especially want to congratulate the members of the 2008-2009 Bartelso Braves state championship basketball team: Emily Koelling, April Gebke, Madison Thole, Kaitlyn Albers, Katlyn Albers, Paige Varel, Torre Kohrmann, Nicole Loepker, Noel Loepker, Jillian Menkhaus, Erin Brueggemann, Sophie Rickhoff, Elle Gebke, Chloe Beckmann and Madison Haake.

These young ladies have made our community proud, and have brought home the championship trophy to Bartelso. I wish them all the best in their future academic and athletic endeavors.

HONORING MILCA GUTIERREZ

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Milca Gutierrez upon being named as the Children's Miracle Network's "California Champion Across America" for 2009. Miss Gutierrez will be honored on Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at Children's Hospital Central California at an event to kick off the local and national public awareness program.

Milca Gutierrez, of Fresno, California, was diagnosed when she was four months old with a rare disorder called osteogenesis imperfecta, commonly known as brittle bone disease. This rare disorder affects the connective tissue and causes bones to break easily and without any apparent reason. At the age of eleven, Miss Gutierrez has been seen at Children's Hospital Central California over 180 times and has undergone over ten operations; she remains positive with her motto "It's just a bone."

Miss Gutierrez is a constant source of brightness and support, whether to herself or others, she has a unique ability to always help those around her. Once a year she and her family travel to their native hometown in Mexico to provide clothes, toys and stuffed animals to families in need. She is able to live an active and full life; she loves swimming, math and dreams of becoming a doctor. Her unique situation has placed her in a position to advocate for children's hospitals across the nation, serve as a "Champion" for the State of California and act as an ambassador for the seventeen million children who are treated at children's hospitals every year. The Children's Miracle Network sponsors a variety of events to help raise money for children's hospitals; including the Champions Across America initiative, where one child from each state is selected to serve as a champion to help highlight the importance of a children's hospitals. Miss Gutierrez, along with her fellow champions, and her family will travel to Walt Disney World to participate in the Children's Miracle Network Celebration and to Washington, D.C. to highlight the vital work of children's hospitals.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Milca Gutierrez upon her achievements and strength. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Miss Gutierrez many years of happiness and success.

IN HONOR OF JOHN KURKOSKY

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor John Kurkosky of Annandale, Minnesota for creatively using his song-writing and singing talents to support his neighbors in need.

A self-professed "shower singer," John makes a hobby out of writing and singing country, rock and gospel songs. Five years ago, he wrote a song, "Ice Fishin' My Buddies and Me" that gained popularity last year when it was featured on the local news story about

Minnesota ice houses. Though John has recorded about 40 songs, his tale about one of Minnesota's most popular pastimes seems to be everyone's favorite. So popular is this local song that if you Google "Kurkosky fish house song," you'll get hits all over the web, including YouTube.

His CD, "John Kurkosky: My Mixed Up Music" sells at a shop in Annandale, Minnesota and is also available by mail. As a construction worker, John doesn't plan to quit his day job anytime soon, but since March is Food Share Month, he is using his talent to set up fundraising events in Central Minnesota for local food shelves. In addition, John already donates a portion of every CD sale to food shelves. This March campaign is the largest food drive in the state, supporting work at 260 food shelves across Minnesota.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor John Kurkosky on his musical success and his charitable efforts. It is Minnesotans like John that make our communities better places to live, work and raise a family.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately last night, March 16, 2009, I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 987, H.R. 1217, and H.R. 1284. I was dealing with the death of a very dear friend of mine over the weekend and was visiting with his family Monday night.

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 125, on suspending the Rules and passing H.R. 987, naming the John Scott Challis, Jr. Post Office, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 126, on suspending the Rules and passing H.R. 1217, naming the Specialist Peter J. Navarro Post Office, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 127, on suspending the Rules and passing H.R. 1284, naming the Major Ed W. Freeman Post Office, I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO THE ALTAMONT LIONS CLUB

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an important community institution. The Altamont Lions Club in Altamont, Illinois, celebrated its 70th Anniversary on January 15 at the Immanuel Lutheran Church Parish Hall.

Since January 1939, the Altamont Lions Club has been doing good deeds in this small town in Effingham County, Illinois. Each year, the club gives two Lions Club scholarships to deserving students in the community. Through the Lions' nationwide commitment to assisting the sight-impaired, they hold candy days fundraisers to purchase large-print Readers' Digests for the local library, and donate funds to enable blind youth to attend Space Camp.

This commitment has also led to the club purchasing eyeglasses for community members in need. In recent years, the Altamont Lions have sponsored youth soccer and basketball leagues, giving area children a positive opportunity for healthy recreation.

I want to congratulate Club President Jim Strange and the members of the Altamont Lions Club on 70 years of good work, and wish them all the best for the next 70 years and beyond.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Speaker, in accordance with the February 2008 New Republican Earmark Standards Guidance, I submit the following in regards to the Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act found in H.R. 1105: Department of Agriculture—Preharvest Food Safety

H.R. 1105, the FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act contains \$142,000 for Preharvest Food Safety, Kansas, in the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service's Research and Education Activities Account. The entity to receive funding for this project is the Kansas State University, located at 1 10 Anderson Hall, Manhattan, Kansas 66506.

The funding would be used to expand its research in emerging threats of food-borne and zoonotic diseases associated with food-producing animals.

No matching funds are required for this Department of Agriculture project.

Department of Agriculture—Karnal Bunt

H.R. 1105, the FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act contains \$508,000 for Karnal Bunt, Manhattan, Kansas, in the Agriculture Research Service's Salaries and Expenses Account. The entity to receive funding for this project is the Kansas State University, located at 1 10 Anderson Hall, Manhattan, Kansas 66506.

This funding will be used to develop breeding lines of wheat that are resistant to existing and emerging diseases, including Karnal Bunt, leaf rust, and UG99 stem rust.

No matching funds are required for this Department of Agriculture project.

HONORING FLYING CROSS RECIPIENT ROBERT P. CHRISTIANSEN OF HOMOSASSA, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an American hero and Distinguished Flying Cross recipient, Major Robert P. Christiansen of Homosassa, Florida. His extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial combat flight during an engagement in Southeast Asia in 1968 and his service to our Nation will forever be remembered by this Congress. Mr. Christiansen bravely encountered dangerous and life-threatening events during his time in the Air Force.

Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Mr. Christiansen graduated from West Point in 1957. He bravely served our country as a fighter pilot for the next 15 years, including service in Southeast Asia. On May 1, 1968, Mr. Christiansen bravely participated in an aerial combat mission.

On that night, Mr. Christiansen and his navigator bombardier dutifully responded to an urgent call to attack a convoy of hostile vehicles in a heavily defended and strategically important area. Mr. Christiansen made three attacks and was credited with destroying five vehicles and causing two significant secondary explosions. The professional skill and personal devotion displayed by Mr. Christiansen reflect his immense commitment and sacrifice.

Madam Speaker, soldiers like Robert P. Christiansen should be recognized for their service to our Nation and for their commitment and sacrifices in battle. I am honored to congratulate Mr. Christiansen on his long overdue Flying Cross award. His family, friends and loved ones should know that we truly consider him one of America's heroes.

THE HOME OFFICE DEDUCTION SIMPLIFICATION ACT (H.R. 1509)

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. McHUGH. Madam Speaker, yesterday, March 16, 2009, the Gentleman from Oregon, Mr. SCHRADER, and I introduced legislation, H.R. 1509, the Home Office Deduction Simplification Act. This legislation, which was H.R. 6214 in the 110th Congress, is designed to reduce the complexity of the tax code and provide Americans with the ability to elect to take a standard deduction in the amount of \$1,500 for home office expenses.

In 1976, Congress enacted Section 280A of the Internal Revenue Code, which was amended in 1997, provides the limited circumstances in which an individual or an S corporation may take a deduction for expenses related to an office in the home. Generally, deductions are limited to those parts of a home that are exclusively used on a regular basis as a principal place of business or to meet with patients, clients, or customers.

As a result of technological advancements and other significant changes in our economy over the past 40 years, many more small businesses are now able to effectively operate out of the home. Not surprisingly, there has been a growth in the use of home offices; according to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the home office deduction was taken on 3.3 million self-employed business returns in tax year 2006, an increase of 700,000 from tax year 2002.

Nonetheless, the IRS reports that "a substantial number of taxpayers with home office expenses are not claiming them on tax returns." According to the IRS, the deduction might be underutilized because "understanding and complying with the rules for deducting home office expenses can be difficult for small business and self-employed taxpayers." This is borne out by an IRS analysis that found almost half of the taxpayers claiming a home office deduction made errors.

Small businesses are unquestionably the backbone of our nation's economy. In fact,

some 27 million American small businesses represent more than 99 percent of all employers, provide 51% of private sector employment and 45% of its payroll, and produce approximately 50% of the nation's private, nonfarm GDP. I could not overstate the importance of the nearly 66,000 small businesses I have the privilege of representing to the economy of Northern and Central New York.

The importance of this measure to small businesses is evident by the fact that it is supported by a coalition that includes the Alliance of Visual Artists, American Homeowners Grassroots Alliance, Associated Builders & Contractors (ABC), Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO), National Association for the Self-Employed (NASE), National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), National Small Business Association (NSBA), Professional Photographers of America, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, Small Business Legislative Council (SBLC), and Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP). The Home Office Deduction Simplification Act is also supported by the SBA Office of Advocacy.

Given the importance of small businesses to our economy, it is imperative that Congress act when presented with opportunities to reduce or remove costly regulatory burdens. The current home office deduction presents such an opportunity, which Congress can reduce, by enacting the Home Office Deduction Simplification Act. Accordingly, I ask my colleagues to join with Mr. SCHRADER and me to enact this important measure.

HONORING ST. PATRICK'S DAY AND THE INDY SPORTS FOUNDATION

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, today I rise in recognition of Saint Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. As we celebrate St. Patrick's Day, I would like to honor the Indy Sports Foundation for their continued dedication in civic engagement and preservation of the rich Irish heritage in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The Indy Sports Foundation has done an excellent job of hosting the Annual Indianapolis St. Patrick's Day Parade and Celebration along with the Annual Shamrock Run/Walk. With nearly 2,000 participants and over 20,000 spectators, the Indy Sports Foundation celebrates the vibrant Irish culture and Irish contributions to American society.

For the past 25 years, the Indy Sports Foundation has played an invaluable role in our community to promote athletics and youth engagement. They have sponsored events such as the Special Olympic Camps, summer programs for disabled children, and provided mentorship for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Each year, the Indy Sports Foundation recognizes an outstanding individual who's dynamic and selfless contributions have impacted the public good. I would like to congratulate Pat Cronin, the first female to be named "Indianapolis Irish Citizen of the Year." I thank her for her service to the Irish community and her ceaseless efforts to advance the philanthropic mission of the Indy Sports Foundation.

I urge my colleagues to join me this St. Patrick's Day in recognizing the Indy Sports Foundation for their ongoing involvement in the Greater Indianapolis community.

INTRODUCTION OF LOWER BRULE AND CROW CREEK TRIBAL COM- PENSATION ACT

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to reintroduce the Lower Brule and Crow Creek Tribal Compensation Act. This bill would fully compensate the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe and the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe in South Dakota for the lands that they lost as a result of the federal government's construction of the massive dams on the main stem of the Missouri River.

The Lower Brule Sioux Tribe and the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe reservations border on the Missouri River in central South Dakota and are connected by the Big Bend Dam. The 1944 Flood Control Act flooded and devalued tribal lands. The flooding also took an enormous toll on the people of both tribes and their economies. It is critically important that we seek to fully reimburse these tribes for the lands they lost.

Congress created a trust fund for the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe in 1996, and a separate trust fund for the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe in 1997. These trust funds sought to compensate the tribes for the value of their land that is now permanently inundated as a result of the construction of the Big Bend Dam.

Regrettably, the compensation amounts varied between separate but similarly-situated tribes along the Missouri River. The result was unfair and inadequate compensation trust funds for Lower Brule and Crow Creek, and therefore, Congress should revisit the compensation levels provided to these tribes in the 1990s. This act is designed to create consistency among the affected tribes and to bring some long-overdue closure to the people of Lower Brule and Crow Creek.

Compensation for these tribes would give the tribes the tools they need for economic recovery in the face of lasting impacts from the 1944 Flood Control Act. This compensation would enable the tribe to improve their community facilities and fix their roads. It would mean better health care and newer schools. Most importantly, it would mean a real chance for these tribes to provide future generations with the tools that so many of us take for granted.

I am hopeful that the House will move quickly in the 111th Congress to advance this important legislation. An earlier version of this bill was reported by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in the 108th Congress and ultimately passed the Senate. In the 109th Congress it was amended in the Senate after further hearings and then reported. In the 110th Congress, the Committee on Natural Resources Water and Power Subcommittee held a legislative hearing on an identical bill.

In closing, I respectfully ask my colleagues to support the Lower Brule and Crow Creek Tribal Compensation Act and work with me to enact legislation that would fairly and appro-

priately compensate members of the Lower Brule and Crow Creek Sioux Tribes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PATHWAY FOR BIOSIMILARS ACT

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, the field of biotechnology is the future of medicine. Scientists and doctors are just beginning to scratch the surface of the potential to harness the extraordinary power of biology and the astounding natural processes which occur in the human body, in animals, and in other living organisms to advance breakthrough medical discoveries and treatments. While ordinary pharmaceuticals primarily treat the symptoms of a disease or illness, biotechnology products—"biologics"—can be manipulated to target the underlying mechanisms and pathways of a disease.

Through the study of biotechnology, the potential exists to develop effective treatments for cancer and AIDS, many of which are already saving lives. We will cure diabetes. We will prevent the onset of deadly and debilitating diseases such as Alzheimer's, heart disease, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis and arthritis. We will save millions of lives and improve countless more.

The development of biologics is expensive and extremely risky. Bringing a biologic to market can require hundreds of millions of dollars in research and development costs and can take several years. For every successful biologic, there are another 10 or 20 that do not pan out, making the incentives for investment in this field extremely sensitive for any changes in the regulatory structure for biologics.

In 1984 the highly successful Hatch-Waxman Act was enacted, establishing a new market for generic versions of pharmaceuticals. Today, patients can buy generic drugs that are safe and save them money compared with brand name drugs. The Pathway for Biosimilars Act will accomplish the same thing for biologics.

In the relatively young industry of biotechnology, many of the original patents on biologics are beginning to expire and it's appropriate for Congress to consider how "follow-on" biologics or "biosimilars" are considered and approved by the FDA, and the impact these products will have on patient health and safety, health care costs, and incentives for innovation.

As a primary matter, it's important to recognize that traditional "small-molecule" pharmaceuticals and biologics are fundamentally different in their development, their manufacture and their chemical makeup. A traditional small-molecule drug is manufactured through synthesis of chemical ingredients in an ordered process, and the resulting product can be easily identified through laboratory analysis. A biologic is a large, complex molecule, which is "grown" in living systems such as a microorganism, a plant or animal cell. The resulting protein is unique to the cell lines and specific process used to produce it, and even slight differences in the manufacturing of a biologic can alter its nature. As a result, biologics are difficult, sometimes impossible to

characterize, and laboratory analysis of the finished product is insufficient to ensure its safety and efficacy.

The pharmaceutical drug production process is easily replicated and a "generic" drug product is virtually identical to the original innovative product, so generic drug manufacturers are permitted to reference the original testing data submitted by the innovator companies when the original drug is submitted to the FDA for approval. With biologics, the manufacturing process is unique to each biologic and is not generally disclosed as part of the published patent. A biosimilar manufacturer would have to have intimate knowledge of these proprietary processes in order to "duplicate" the biologic product, and even then it is extremely difficult—no two living cell lines are identical, so no two biologics manufacturing processes have identical starting materials or proceed in the same way.

It's also important to note that because biologics are produced with cells from living organisms, many of them can cause an immune reaction which is normally benign and does not affect safety. However, some of these reactions can negate the effectiveness of the biologic or even cause side effects that are more dangerous. Most of these reactions can only be observed through clinical trials with real patients.

Any expedited regulatory pathway for biosimilars must account for all these factors and I'm proud to join with Congressman JAY INSLEE and the Ranking Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Rep. JOE BARTON, to introduce the Pathway for Biologics Act. Our bill builds on the significant progress the Senate, led by Senators KENNEDY and ENZI, already made during the last Congress, as well as the significant level of consensus we have heard on our Committee about this issue. The Pathway for Biologics Act will establish a new statutory pathway for biosimilars guided by three principles:

1. Legislation to facilitate the development of biosimilars should promote competition and lower prices, but patient safety, efficacy and sound science must be paramount.

2. We must preserve incentives for innovation and ensure that patients will continue to benefit from the ground-breaking treatments biotechnology alone can bring.

3. We must strive to protect the rights of all parties and resolve disputes over patents in a timely and efficient manner that does not delay market entry and provides certainty to all parties.

The regulatory pathway set forth in the Pathway for Biologics Act embodies each of these principles and sets forth a sensible, scientifically sound process for approval of biosimilars. The legislation allows for input from all interested parties and provides FDA appropriate flexibility to protect patient health by requesting analytical, animal and clinical studies to demonstrate the safety, purity and potency of a biosimilar. The FDA will be empowered to require the tests and data it deems necessary, but the results of clinical testing for immunogenicity will always be required as part of this data unless the FDA has published final guidance documents advising that such a determination is feasible in the current state of science absent clinical data and explaining the data that will be required to support such a determination. Since biologics are derived from human and animal products,

immune reactions are a major concern for any new biologic product and are now impossible to detect without actual human testing.

Our legislation also addresses the important issue of interchangeability of biosimilars for the reference product. Some legislative proposals would allow the FDA to permit pharmacists and insurers to substitute a biosimilar for a physician's prescription for an innovator biologic product even when they cannot be demonstrated to be identical in their composition or effectiveness. Interchangeability of generic pharmaceuticals for brand name drugs is entirely appropriate since traditional generic drugs are chemically identical to the reference product. However, if the state of science is such that a complex molecule cannot be fully characterized and a precursor biologic cannot be adequately compared to a proposed biosimilar, then the biosimilar should not be fully substitutable for the precursor product without a physician's direction. The Pathway for Biologics Act makes it clear that the FDA cannot make a determination that a biosimilar is interchangeable with a reference product until it has published final guidance documents advising that it is feasible in the current state of scientific knowledge to make such determinations with respect to the relevant product class and explaining the data that will be required to support such a determination. This requirement is consistent with the recommendations of the Chief Scientist of the FDA.

An essential element of any new regulatory scheme for the biotech industry is a careful balancing of incentives for innovation and opportunities for new entry by competitors. To preserve incentives for innovation, the Pathway for Biologics Act provides 12 years of data exclusivity for new biologic products, which ensures that biosimilar applications that rely on the safety and efficacy record of existing biologic products will not be permitted to enter the market for 12 years following the approval of the innovator product. The 12-year exclusivity period is meant to preserve existing protections biotech companies receive from patents. The Congressional Budget Office has found that the effective patent life for pharmaceuticals is about 11.5 years, so a data exclusivity period of 12 years is consistent with that finding. Data exclusivity is necessary to provide additional protections and incentives for biologics because biosimilars—unlike generic drugs—will not be chemically identical to the reference product and will be less likely to infringe the patents of the innovator.

The legislation also includes incentives for additional indications and pediatric testing. New indications are critical for biologics and are often more significant than the indications for which approval was granted. Incentives for continued testing on new indications must be included to promote access to new treatments and cures, and this bill provides an additional two years exclusivity for new indications. I also believe it's important to provide incentives similar to those given traditional pharmaceuticals under the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act to biologics, so the legislation provides an additional six months of data exclusivity for testing for use in pediatric groups.

In order to protect the rights of all parties and ensure that all patent disputes involving a biosimilar are resolved before the expiration of the data exclusivity period, the Pathway for Biosimilars Act establishes a simple, streamlined patent resolution process. This process

would take place within a short window of time—roughly 6–8 months after the biosimilar application has been filed with the FDA. It will help ensure that litigation surrounding relevant patents will be resolved expeditiously and prior to the launch of the biosimilar product, providing certainty to the applicant, the reference product manufacturer, and the public at large. The legislation also preserves the ability of third-party patent holders such as universities and medical centers to defend their patents.

Once a biosimilar application is accepted by the FDA, the agency will publish a notice identifying the reference product and a designated agent for the biosimilar applicant. After an exchange of information to identify the relevant patents at issue, the applicant can decide to challenge any patent's validity or applicability. All information exchanged as part of this procedure must be maintained in strict confidence and used solely for the purpose of identifying patents relevant to the biosimilar product. The patent owner will then have two months to decide whether to enforce the patent. If the patent owner's case is successful in court, the final approval of the application will be deferred until the patent expires.

Madam Speaker, I believe the Pathway for Biosimilars Act sets forth a straightforward, scientifically based process for expedited approval of new biologics based on innovative products already on the market. This new biosimilars approval pathway will promote competition and lower prices, but also ensure that patients are given safe and effective treatments that have been subjected to thorough scrutiny and testing by the FDA. The Pathway for Biosimilars Act will also protect the rights of patent holders and preserve incentives for innovation in the biotechnology sector to develop the next generation of life-saving, life-changing therapies.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the Pathway for Biosimilars Act.

TRIBUTE TO HARRISBURG JUNIOR BULLDOGS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a championship team from Harrisburg, Illinois.

On February 18, the Harrisburg Junior Bulldogs beat previously-undefeated Carlyle 52–43 to clinch the 2009 Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association Class L state championship. Finishing with a record of 26–1, the Junior Bulldogs gave Harrisburg Middle School its first state championship in boys basketball.

Facing a strong, talented opponent, the Junior Bulldogs stayed cool under pressure, held off a late rally and then came from behind to seal the win. This year's team exemplifies teamwork. As Coach Kevin Dowdy told the local newspaper, "Everyone had their part."

I want to congratulate Coach Dowdy and his assistant coach, Marcus Questelle, on their fine work with this group of student athletes. I also want to extend my congratulations to the members of the 2008–2009 Harrisburg Junior Bulldogs state championship boys basketball team: Tyler Smithpeters, Capel Henshaw,

Ryne Roper, Brian Berkel, Caleb Bailey, Justin Younger, Cody Hall, Isaac Ingram, Caleb Bartok, Gabe Oglesby, Phillip West, Brandon Pate and Chris Wilsey.

This outstanding group of young men represented themselves, their school, families and community in a first-rate fashion. It is my privilege to congratulate them on a job well done.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRESERVATION OF ANTIBIOTICS FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT ACT

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce legislation that is critically important in preventing our current stock of antibiotics from becoming obsolete. As a mother, grandmother, and microbiologist, I cannot stress the urgency of this problem enough.

Two million Americans acquire bacterial infections during their hospital stay every year, and 70 percent of their infections will be resistant to the drugs commonly used to treat them. As a result, every day thirty-eight patients in our hospitals will die of those infections.

Sadly, children and infants are particularly susceptible to infections caused by antibiotic resistant bacteria. For example, Salmonella causes 1.4 million illnesses every year. Over one-third of all diagnoses occur in children under the age of 10. Infants under the age of one are 10 times more likely than the general population to acquire a Salmonella infection. In 1995, 19 percent of Salmonella strains were found to be multi-drug resistant. That means that our children are left to undergo multiple treatments for otherwise simple infections because we have allowed traditional treatments to become ineffective.

And the cost to our already strained health care system is astronomical. In fact, resistant bacterial infections increase health care costs by \$4 billion to \$5 billion each year.

Currently, seven classes of antibiotics certified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as "highly" or "critically" important in human medicine are used in agriculture as animal feed additives. Among them are penicillin, tetracyclines, macrolides, lincosamides, streptogramins, aminoglycosides, and sulfonamides. These classes of antibiotics are among the most critically important in our arsenal of defense against potentially fatal human diseases.

Penicillins, for example, are used to treat infections ranging from strep throat to meningitis. Macrolides and Sulfonamides are used to prevent secondary infections in patients with AIDS and to treat pneumonia in HIV-infected patients. Tetracyclines are used to treat people potentially exposed to anthrax.

Despite their importance in human medicine, these drugs are added to animal feed as growth promotants and for routine disease prevention. Approximately 70 percent of antibiotics and related drugs produced in the U.S. are given to cattle, pigs, and chicken to promote growth and to compensate for crowded, unsanitary, stressful conditions. The nontherapeutic use of antibiotics in poultry skyrocketed

from 2 million pounds in 1985 to 10.5 million pounds in the late 1990s.

This kind of habitual, nontherapeutic use of antibiotics has been conclusively linked to a growing number of incidents of antimicrobial-resistant infections in humans, and may be contaminating ground water with resistant bacteria in rural areas. In fact, a National Academy of Sciences report states that, "a decrease in antimicrobial use in human medicine alone will have little effect on the current situation. Substantial efforts must be made to decrease inappropriate overuse in animals and agriculture as well."

Resistant bacteria can be transferred from animals to humans in several ways. Antibiotic resistant bacteria can be found in the meat and poultry that we purchase in the grocery store. In fact, a New England Journal of Medicine study conducted in Washington, DC found that 20 percent of the meat sampled was contaminated with Salmonella and 84 percent of those bacteria were resistant to antibiotics used in human medicine and animal agriculture. Bacteria can also be transferred from animals to humans via workers in the livestock industry who handle animals, feed, and manure. Farmers may then transfer the bacteria on to their family. A third method is via the environment. Nearly 2 trillion pounds of manure generated in the U.S. annually contaminate our groundwater, surface water, and soil. Because this manure contains resistant bacteria, the resistant bacteria can then be passed on to humans that come in contact with the water sources or soil.

And the problem has been well documented.

A 2002 analysis of more than 500 scientific articles and published in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases found that "many lines of evidence link antimicrobial resistant human infections to foodborne pathogens of animal origin."

The Institute of Medicine's 2003 report on Microbial Threats to Health concluded "Clearly, a decrease in the inappropriate use of antimicrobials in human medicine alone is not enough. Substantial efforts must be made to decrease inappropriate overuse in animals and agriculture as well."

As the impact of MRSA continues to unfold, there is little doubt that antibiotic resistant diseases are a growing public health menace demanding a high priority response. Despite increased attention to the issue, the response has been inadequate. Part of the problem has been the FDA's failure to adequately address the effect of the misuse of animal antibiotics on the efficacy of human drugs.

Although the FDA could withdraw its approval for these antibiotics, its record of reviewing currently approved drugs under existing procedures indicates that it would take nearly a century to get these medically important antibiotics out of the feed given to food producing animals. In October 2000, for example, the FDA began consideration of a proposal to withdraw its approval for the therapeutic use of fluoroquinolones in poultry. The review, and eventual withdrawal of approval, took five years to complete. Under its regulations, the FDA must review each class of antibiotics separately.

The legislation I am reintroducing today, the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act, would phase out the use of the seven classes of medically significant anti-

biotics that are currently approved for nontherapeutic use in animal agriculture. Make no mistake, this bill would in no way infringe upon the use of these drugs to treat a sick animal. It simply proscribes their nontherapeutic use.

Madam Speaker, when we go to the grocery store to pick up dinner, we should be able to buy our food without worrying that eating it will expose our family to potentially deadly bacteria that will no longer respond to our medical treatments. Unless we act now, we will unwittingly be permitting animals to serve as incubators for resistant bacteria.

It is time for Congress to stand with scientists, the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, and the National Academy of Sciences and do something to address the spread of resistant bacteria. We cannot afford for our medicines to become obsolete.

I urge my colleagues to support the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act to protect the integrity of our antibiotics and the health of American families.

TRIBUTE TO TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an important community institution in Mt. Vernon, Illinois.

In February, Trinity Episcopal Church celebrated its 100th anniversary. Since the first service was held at 1100 Harrison Street in Mt. Vernon on January 3, 1909, thousands of people have visited Trinity Episcopal to worship with their neighbors. Generations of families in Mt. Vernon and Jefferson County have been welcomed into the congregation.

Today, Trinity Episcopal is an important part of the spiritual fabric of the community and serves as a good neighbor to families in need throughout the area. Through a century of the congregation's generosity, many have found a helping hand, warm embrace, and comfort in times of despair.

I want to congratulate Father Gene Tucker of Trinity Episcopal, all members of the congregation, and the extended Trinity Episcopal family on 100 years of service and thank them for the important role they play in our community.

RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA), THE JET PROPULSION LABORATORY (JPL), AND CORNELL UNIVERSITY FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE MARS EXPLORATION ROVERS, SPIRIT AND OPPORTUNITY, ON THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROVERS' SUCCESSFUL LANDING

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, just over 5 years ago, two engineering marvels—the Mars

Exploration Rovers Spirit and Opportunity—captured the imagination of the American public and the world when they landed on Mars to begin a 3 month-long NASA mission. The mission objective was to search for signs that water may have been present for long periods of time—signs that could tell us whether the Red Planet had been hospitable to life in the past. Within the first several months of the Mars mission, the NASA Web site experienced over a billion site visits. The Mars Exploration Rovers have been a wildly successful mission, with more than 13 miles of harsh Martian terrain traversed and over a quarter million awe-inspiring images from the Martian surface captured, in addition to many thousands of scientific spectra that lends to our study of Mars.

Spirit and Opportunity have made many important discoveries over the last 5 years. One of the most significant discoveries was evidence of water and geological information that supports an understanding that ancient Martian environments included periods of wet, possibly habitable conditions.

I wholeheartedly support H. Res. 67, the resolution offered by my friends and colleagues from southern California, Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. DREIER to honor NASA, their team from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and Cornell University on 5 years of great engineering and scientific discovery.

TRIBUTE TO Y-YARD AUTO AND TRUCK, INC.

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Y-Yard Auto and Truck, Inc. of Effingham, Illinois.

Y-Yard Auto and Truck, Inc. was awarded the Automotive Recyclers Association CAR Star award in recognition of their commitment to environmental stewardship in the automotive recycling industry.

I would like to congratulate Y-Yard Auto and Truck, Inc. for this achievement, earned by upholding the highest in standards of environmental consciousness, safety, and customer service setting a leading example in their industry and community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mrs. MYRICK. Madam Speaker, I was unable to participate in the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall vote 125, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 987, the John Scott Challis, Jr. Post Office Designation Act, I would have voted "aye."

Rollcall vote 126, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1217, the Specialist Peter J. Navarro Post Office Building Designation Act, I would have voted "aye."

Rollcall vote 127, on motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1284, the Major Ed W.

Freeman Post Office Designation Act, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL ROBERT E. DUIGNAN

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Riverside, California and to the United States of America are exceptional. This country has been fortunate to have dedicated, honorable, and steadfast leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent to make our communities better places to live and work. General Robert E. Duignan of the United States Air Force is one of these individuals and today I thank him for 36 years of service to our great nation. On Sunday, January 25, 2009, General Duignan was honored with a retirement celebration at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside, California.

General Duignan took his first plane ride at the age of 13, traveling from Seattle to New York, and from that moment he knew that he wanted to fly airplanes. He attended the University of Washington on an ROTC scholarship and earned a bachelor's degree in business. He entered the Air Force during the Vietnam War, a time when it was not popular to be in the military, and he experienced firsthand the objection to the war on his college campus. However, he never changed course and after graduation he spent 14 years at Travis Air Force Base, flying C-141 cargo planes on missions across the world, sometimes to pick up a single wounded soldier.

In 1989, General Duignan was promoted to Deputy Commander of Operations for the 459th Military Airlift Wing. While serving in this post, General Duignan witnessed the September 11, 2001, attack on the Pentagon and focused his efforts on the Global War on Terror as the Director of Plans and Programs at Headquarters AFRC. After two years, he returned to March Air Reserve Base and has worked tirelessly in support of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the Commander of the 4th Air Force he has supervised the Reserve's long-range airlift and air refueling units located throughout the continental United States, Hawaii and Guam. It is also important to note that during his career, he has accumulated more than 5,000 flying hours as a pilot flying the C-141, C-5, T-38 and T-37 aircrafts.

As we look at the incredibly rich military history of our country we realize that this history is comprised of men, just like General Robert Duignan, who bravely fought for the ideals of freedom and democracy. Each story is unique and humbling for those of us who, far from the dangers they have faced, live our lives in relative comfort and ease. Today I offer my gratitude for the decades of service and I salute Major General Robert Duignan as he retires from the United States Air Force.

FAIR TAX

HON. HENRY E. BROWN, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight a unique and innovative economic stimulus proposal that doesn't rely on large amounts of government spending, borrowing from foreign governments, or rebate checks. Instead, the Fair Tax would be a permanent economic stimulus that would have none of the transparency issues of conventional spending, or of the current tax code under the IRS. As a co-sponsor of H.R. 25, the Fair Tax Act, I believe that simplification of the 45,000 page tax code will empower the American people through returning their earned spending power to them, and by reducing government spending.

The Fair Tax replaces all federal income and payroll based taxes with a progressive national retail sales tax, a prebate to ensure no American pays federal taxes on spending up to the poverty level, dollar-for-dollar federal revenue neutrality, and, through companion legislation, the repeal of the 16th Amendment. It abolishes all federal personal and corporate income taxes, gift, estate, capital gains, alternative minimum, Social Security, Medicare, and self-employment taxes and replaces them with one simple, visible, federal retail sales tax administered primarily by existing state sales tax authorities.

As April 15th approaches, imagine this: no tax forms to wade through, no worries about deductions, withholding, or underpayment, and no payroll tax. Instead you, just like every American, would have more take-home income that could be put towards things like mortgage bills, thereby addressing one of the root causes of this economic crisis.

I hope that in the future we will consider such innovative proposals as the Fair Tax, and I thank my colleagues Rep. JOHN LINDER from Georgia who has done so much to publicize the idea of the Fair Tax, and Rep. STEVE KING of Iowa who called this Special Order.

Madam Speaker, we can do something better than haphazard spending to get us out of this economic mess. We can simplify a tax code that destroys wealth, and replace it with one that lets Americans keep their entire paycheck. It's time for new solutions, and not more of the old tax and spend.

HONORING THE KNIGHTS OF PETER CLAVER, INC. AND THE CENTENNIAL OF THEIR FOUNDING

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the Knights of Peter Claver, Inc. and to celebrate this group's century of dedication to God, Church, and Community through Charity.

In November of 1909, a group of forty African American men became the first initiates of a Catholic fraternal order called the Knights of

Peter Claver. This group was founded in Mobile, Alabama with the aim of creating a Catholic fraternal society for men who were traditionally not able to belong to such organizations. Today, the Knights of Peter Claver, Inc. has over 18,000 members, is active in over thirty states, and includes divisions for men, women and children. In my home state of Texas, this group is particularly active and has been involved with numerous community outreach programs throughout the state.

The Knights of Peter Claver and other such organizations have made incredible contributions to society. Throughout its history, this group has supported community efforts, scholarship and various charitable programs. Additionally, during times of strife for the African American Community, the Knights of Peter Claver supported non-violent actions to fight many social injustices.

This August, The Knights of Peter Claver, Inc. will celebrate the centennial of their society at their 94th National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana. I ask my fellow Members of Congress to join me in honoring this group and to celebrate their hundred years of dedication to God and service to community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ROBERT HALE

HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. AUSTRIA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Robert Hale, for his outstanding service to the community on the occasion of his retirement.

On behalf of the people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District, I am honored to congratulate Robert Hale on being recognized by the Filipino-American community, his business associates and employees, and his family upon his recent retirement.

His dedicated service to the citizens of Dayton and the Filipino-American community is both admirable and commendable. Hale spent the last 25 years working at Dayton Mailing Service, Inc., a company he founded in 1984. He recently retired and his daughter has taken over daily operations of the company.

Robert has been an avid supporter of the Philippine-American Society of Greater Dayton, the Association of Philippine Physicians of Greater Dayton, Filipino-American Ladies Organization of Dayton and the former Philippine Folk Arts Society. Hale is a member of the Optimist Club and joined the Peace Corps in 1962.

He has been a driving force within the business and Filipino-American communities in the Dayton area and has earned the respect and admiration of all those with whom he has served and the gratitude of the people that have come to know him.

The people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District and I extend best wishes upon retirement and ongoing success in all endeavors.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE EVERY STUDENT COUNTS ACT

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Every Student Counts Act," legislation that will prioritize graduation of all of our Nation's high school students. My friend, Senator TOM HARKIN, the Senator from Iowa, is also introducing this legislation in the Senate.

Madam Speaker, as you know in 2001, The No Child Left Behind Act passed with broad bipartisan support. The purpose of No Child Left Behind was to ensure that every student in America would receive a quality education. However, over the past eight years, NCLB has not lived up to its promises. Certain aspects of the law are difficult to implement and are not bringing about the results we thought it would. One of the major shortcomings of NCLB is its failure to hold schools accountable for dropouts. Although we believed we addressed this issue in the original NCLB legislation, this portion of the law has not been implemented as we had hoped. Instead, under current law, the only meaningful accountability standard for high schools is students' scores on standardized tests, with virtually no concern given to how many students graduate or drop out of school. Unfortunately, this myopic accountability standard has created an incentive for high schools to push out students who are struggling academically, so that their test scores are not counted in the assessments. Furthermore, the current accountability system also has allowed States to report graduation rates inconsistently and in misleading ways. Finally, NCLB does not require the disaggregation of graduation rates by subgroup, leading to incomplete data on how our schools are doing with one subgroup compared to others.

What is clear is the fact that the current high school accountability system is failing both our students and our Nation. Each year, about 1.23 million secondary school students, approximately one-third of all secondary school students, fail to graduate with their peers. In addition, nearly 2,000 secondary schools—roughly 12 percent of all secondary schools in the United States—produce about half of the Nation's secondary school dropouts. In these schools, the number of seniors is routinely 60 percent or less than the number of freshmen three years earlier. And almost half of the Nation's African-American students and nearly 40 percent of Latino students attend these so called "dropout factories," while only 11 percent of white students do.

In Virginia last year, nearly 30,000 students did not graduate from high school with their peers. But the numbers are worse for minorities—only about 50 percent of African American students and 60 percent of Hispanic students graduate on time with a regular diploma, compared to 75 percent of whites.

These numbers are just the tip of the iceberg. Research shows that the lifetime earnings difference between a high school dropout and a high school graduate is about \$260,000. This loss in potential earnings of a dropout can cause serious hardships throughout their lifetime. We cannot sit back and allow this

problem to escalate, or our inaction will create a generation of lower and stagnant earnings and a poorer quality of life. We must reverse this trend and hold schools accountable for graduation rates and dropouts, so all students are graduating with a high school diploma and improving their outcomes in life.

Additionally, reducing dropouts improves America's position in both the global economy and workforce. Attaining a high school diploma is the first step in becoming a member of the educated workforce. Having unprepared workers sets us back considerably, diminishing our role as a global leader in the economy. The major competitive advantage America has in the global economy is an educated workforce. Yet, with an estimated 3.5 million Americans ages 16 to 25 who do not have a high school diploma and are not enrolled in school, we are slowly losing this advantage. Because of the need for well-educated workers to keep our country competitive, we can't allow—or afford—our Nation's high school students to dropout and not reach their full potential.

Until recently, federal policy did not place nearly enough importance on graduating the Nation's high school students. The regulations released by the Department of Education in October 2008 did much to correct the lack of attention to graduation rates in the federal accountability system: they require a uniform graduation rate calculation and improvement in graduation rates over time. Though these regulations are a laudable step in the right direction, they do not go far enough in setting consistent, high graduation rate goals and aggressive, attainable graduation rate growth targets. Without clear guidance and meaningful accountability, most secondary schools can continue to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress, AYP, by making negligible annual improvement in graduation rates and can do so with a consistent, or even growing, graduation gap.

The Every Student Counts Act will bring meaningful accountability to America's high schools by requiring a consistent and accurate calculation of graduation rates across all fifty states to ensure comparability and transparency. The legislation builds on the National Governors Association's Graduation Rate Compact, which was signed by all 50 of the Nation's governors in 2005. Under the Every Student Counts Act, graduation rates and test scores are treated equally in AYP determinations. Moreover, the Every Student Counts Act would require high schools to have aggressive, attainable and uniform annual growth requirements as part of AYP. This will ensure consistent increases to graduation rates for all students by meeting annual, research-based benchmarks with the long-term goal of reaching a 90 percent graduation rate. The bill would also require the disaggregation of graduation data by subgroup to make certain that schools are held accountable for increasing the graduation rate for all of our students and require that school improvement activities focus on closing any achievement gaps.

Recognizing that some small numbers of students take longer than four years to graduate, the bill will give credit to schools, school districts and states for graduating these students while maintaining the primacy of graduating the great preponderance of all students in four years. The Every Student Counts Act will provide incentives for schools, districts and states to create programs to serve students

who have already dropped out and are over-age or under credited. Some credit has to be given to those who get a GED and also those who take more than one or two years and maybe even three years longer than others to graduate. If no credit is given, the school system has no incentive to continue these important programs.

In order to truly ensure that all children have access to a quality education, it is imperative that we take steps to immediately end America's dropout crisis. We must ensure not only that graduation rates increase, but that earning a high school diploma is a meaningful accomplishment. We must use the indicators of student achievement and graduation to know which high schools are doing their job. Those who are must be recognized and supported. Those that are not must be rehabilitated with targeted interventions, whole school reform, or replacement strategies to ensure the standard of accountability with graduation rates and standardized tests are met.

Making sure accountability with graduation rates and standardized testing are met, Virginia's education leaders and the Virginia State Board of Education recently became the first state to give equal consideration to dropout rates and standardized tests when judging AYP. The new standard in Virginia will take effect with the start of the 2011–2012 school years. It also sets an 85 percent graduation rate, well above the dreadful benchmark of 61 percent set for Virginia under the No Child Left Behind Act.

It is my hope that with the Every Student Counts Act, we can make greater strides nationally toward graduating more of America's students and preparing them to succeed in college, the workplace and in life. So, I ask my colleagues to join me in passing this bill and seeing to it that it is quickly enacted into law to ensure, at a minimum, every child becomes a high school graduate.

H.R. 1106, THE HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR HOMES ACT

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, the bill before us is far from perfect. Though it will help some homeowners who are facing foreclosure, this bill requires asking a few additional questions.

Why would Congress want to pass a bill that uses bankruptcy as the first option to re-

solve only some loans, and not all loans, as opposed to invoking the full power of the FDIC and SEC to handle all loans?

This legislation will "protect mortgage services from legal liability." Why would we do this at the same time as we are sending individual homeowners to the bankruptcy gallows?

Why would we pass a bill that eliminates the government's share of any appreciation in the home's value at sale?

Madam Speaker, these are some of the questions for which this bill does not provide answers to those critical questions.

Most of all, this bill continues to reinforce the seriously flawed mortgage securitization approach to the U.S. housing market. The overarching concentration and securitization of the housing mortgage market by Wall Street bond houses and money center banks are continued in the bill rather than replaced by an approach that restores prudent Main Street lending practices again.

Our housing finance system is far too concentrated. Its system-wide imprudent practices centered in the securitization process, itself, have done enormous damage domestically and internationally and have ripped neighborhoods and communities apart across our Nation.

Responsible lending requires that our financial system re-empower the local banking, local underwriting and local mortgage markets first. This bill merely rewards the wrongdoers by letting them fall in the government basket of FHA, FNMA, and Freddie Mac.

A real reform plan should be the foundation stone that precedes any legislation that proposes to transfer hundreds of billions of dollars more to the very money center banks and servicing companies that have produced the chaos that ails our mortgage lending system today. Reform must come first, not last. No matter how well-intentioned any housing bill is, there must be a broader policy context in which it is advanced.

In sum, this plan does not do enough to address the fundamental cause of the financial crisis—widespread and overuse of concentrated securitization practices, mortgage and appraisal fraud, and the seize up of credit markets due to improper use of federal instrumentalities in attempting to resolve the situation.

This bill nips at the edges of a very troubled system, picks up some of the casualties, and lets the Titanic continue to chug toward some iceberg.

Our citizens deserve full justice, not continuing reliance on the very institutions that brought us to this fork in the road.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE, H.R. 1388, THE GENERATIONS INVIGORATING VOLUNTEERISM AND EDUCATION ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I insert into the RECORD the Cost Estimate from the Congressional Budget Office on H.R. 1388, the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, March 17, 2009.

Hon. GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1388, the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Christina Hawley Anthony.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF.

Enclosure.

*H.R. 1388—Generations Invigorating Vol-
unteerism and Education Act*

Summary: H.R. 1388 would amend and reauthorize programs established under the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (NCSA) and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (DVSA).

Assuming appropriation of the estimated amounts, CBO estimates that implementing the bill would cost \$481 million in 2010 and about \$6 billion over the 2010–2014 period. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or receipts.

H.R. 1388 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. H.R. 1388 contains no private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 1388 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 500 (education, employment, training, and social services).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—						
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2009–2014
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION							
NCSA and DVSA Spending Under Current Law:							
Budget Authority ^a	1,084	0	0	0	0	0	1,084
Estimated Outlays	927	688	359	177	89	58	2,299
Proposed Changes:							
Estimated Authorization Level	0	1,312	1,580	1,860	2,151	2,454	9,356
Estimated Outlays	0	481	951	1,249	1,515	1,785	5,980
Spending Under H.R. 1388:							
Estimated Authorization Level ^a	1,084	1,340	1,611	1,894	2,189	2,496	10,440
Estimated Outlays	927	1,169	1,310	1,426	1,604	1,844	8,279

Note: NCSA = National and Community Service Act; DVSA = Domestic Volunteer Service Act.
^a The 2009 level is the amount appropriated for that year for NCSA and DVSA programs.

Basis of estimate: For some programs, the bill would authorize the appropriation of specified amounts for fiscal year 2010 and such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent year through 2014. For those pro-

grams, CBO estimated the authorization level for fiscal years 2011 through 2014 by adjusting the amount authorized for 2010 for anticipated inflation. For the remaining programs authorized by H.R. 1388, the bill would

authorize such sums as may be necessary for each fiscal year. CBO estimated those authorization levels based on historical program costs for similar activities, anticipated

inflation, and the bill's stated goal of achieving 250,000 participants by 2014.

For this estimate, CBO assumes the bill will be enacted by October 1, 2009, and that outlays will follow historical patterns for those programs.

Programs funded under NCSA and DVSA received appropriations of \$1.1 billion for fiscal year 2009, including \$200 million in funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5).

Specified Authorizations: Under H.R. 1388, specified authorizations for 2010 would total \$472 million. Specifically, the bill would authorize the appropriation of the following amounts for 2010:

Foster Grandparent Program (\$115 million),

VISTA (\$100 million),

Learn and Serve America (\$97 million),

Retire and Senior Volunteer Program (\$70 million),

Senior Companion Program (\$55 million), and

National Civilian Community Corps (\$35 million).

CBO estimates that implementing those programs would cost \$1.9 billion over the 2010-2014 period, assuming appropriation of the specified amounts for 2010 and adjusting those amounts for anticipated inflation for 2011 through 2014.

Indefinite Authorizations: The bill also would authorize the appropriation of such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2010 through 2014 for other programs, including AmeriCorps and education awards funded through the National Service Trust. CBO estimates those indefinite authorizations would total \$840 million in fiscal year 2010 and would rise to nearly \$2 billion by 2014.

H.R. 1388 includes a stated goal that participation in all AmeriCorps programs (including the National Civilian Community Corps and VISTA) should increase to 250,000 people by 2014 (participation in those programs was about 75,000 in 2008). For this estimate, CBO assumes that sufficient funds would be provided to meet that goal—\$3.6 billion over the 2010-2014 period, CBO estimates. Those funds would be used primarily to provide grants to states, territories, tribes, and nonprofit organizations to operate volunteer service programs. CBO estimates that outlays for those programs would total \$2.7 billion over the 2010-2014 period.

Most participants in AmeriCorps programs (and some VISTA participants) earn education awards for completing specific terms of service that can be used to repay certain student loans or to pay for future education expenses. In 2009, the maximum award is \$4,725. Beginning in 2010, the maximum full-time education award would be pegged to the amount authorized for Pell grants under the Higher Education Act of 1965. Those amounts are \$6,400 in 2010; \$6,800 in 2011; \$7,200 in 2012; \$7,600 in 2013; and \$8,000 in 2014. CBO estimates that over the 2010-2014 period another \$2.4 billion would be needed to fund education awards for AmeriCorps participants. Assuming the appropriation of those sums, CBO estimates outlays would increase by \$0.5 billion over the five-year period (with significant additional outlays in subsequent years).

CBO also estimates that over the 2010-2014 period, the bill would authorize the appropriation of funds for:

Administrative expenses, including support to state service commissions and evaluation of programs (\$0.6 billion),

Various demonstration programs (\$0.2 billion),

Training and technical assistance programs (\$150 million), and

A new Congressional Commission on Civic Service (\$1 million).

In total, CBO estimates that outlays would rise by \$0.8 billion over the next five years, assuming appropriation of the estimated amounts.

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: H.R. 1388 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA. The bill would authorize grants to state, local, and tribal governments to support national service programs including AmeriCorps, VISTA, and the National Senior Service Corps. CBO estimates state, local, and tribal governments could receive grants totaling more than \$4 billion over the next five years. Any costs to those governments would be incurred voluntarily as a condition of receiving federal assistance.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Christina Hawley Anthony; Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Burke Doherty; Impact on the Private Sector: Patrick Bernhardt.

Estimate approved by: Peter H. Fontaine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand here before you not only as a Member of the United States Congress, but as a woman. I fully support H. Res. 211, "Supporting the goals and ideals of National Women's History Month", this is an issue that I hold dear to my heart. This bill will increase awareness and knowledge of women's involvement in history.

Women's history is a vital part of American history, however it is not public knowledge; mostly in part to the lack of women's history education in the schools. I thank my colleague Representative WOOLSEY for introducing this valuable piece of legislation.

As Susan B. Anthony said "It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed the Union" and "There never will be complete equality until women themselves help to make laws and elect lawmakers."

This national celebration and recognition of women's historic achievements began in 1980 when National Women's History Week was proclaimed by Presidential Proclamation. In 1987, this national celebration was expanded by Congressional Resolution to an entire month by declaring March as National Women's History Month.

National Women's History Month provides an opportunity to educate the general public about the significant role of women in American history and contemporary society. Establishing this focal celebration has encouraged schools to introduce new curriculum, and communities to recognize women who have been pivotal in their own communities.

The knowledge of women's history provides a more expansive vision of what a woman can do. This perspective can encourage girls and women to think larger and bolder and can give boys and men a fuller understanding of the female experience.

Today, women account for 51% of the world's population and throughout "woman's-

kind" we have had countless sisters whose brilliance, bravery and power changed the course of history. H. Res. 211 recognizes and honors the women and organizations in the United States that have fought for and continue to promote the teaching of women's history.

While we have come a long way from the early nineteenth century, when women were considered second class citizens whose existence was limited to the interior life of the home and care of the children, we have yet to achieve equality. It is a shame that a decade into the new millennium we are still fighting for women's equality and the right to be respected for our contributions both in and out of the workplace.

This bill will bring awareness to all of those women who have broken barriers and glass ceilings for the rest of us. Women such as the Honorable Speaker PELOSI, the Honorable Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Susan B. Anthony, the Honorable Barbara Jordan, Sojourner Truth, Sacagawea, Rosa Parks, Amelia Earhart, Joan of Arc, and the list could go on for miles.

However, this month is not only about the well known women of history. It is also about those less renowned, such as Belva Ann Lockwood, who fought for admittance into law school. She fought to practice before the Supreme Court and even ran two full campaigns to run for President of the United States, although she could not vote. Texas is home to a multitude of women. The women of Texas are strong, and National Women's History Month is the perfect time to celebrate the diverse population of women that reside in the great state of Texas. I am a proud Texan, and today, I want to bring attention to several women from Texas who deserve recognition and praise for their influence in the continuing fight for women's equality.

One of my personal heroes is Barbara Jordan. Barbara Jordan was born in the Fifth Ward of Houston to a Baptist minister and a domestic worker. She grew up a native Houstonian, attended Houston public school, and attended Texas Southern University in Houston. In 1966, Barbara Jordan was elected as State Senator becoming the first woman to serve since 1883. Her political career continued to grow when she was elected to Federal Representative in 1972. As a Congresswoman, Barbara Jordan sponsored the cause of the poor, black, and disadvantaged people. She is truly a strong woman from Texas that is more than deserving of our recognition during National Women's History Month.

A native Texan, Ann Richards was politically motivated from a young age. Through the 1950s and 60s, she volunteered on several Democratic Governor campaigns, and by 1976, she won her first political position as a Commissioner in Travis County. Beginning in 1982, she became the first woman elected to statewide office in 50 years as state Treasurer, and in 1990, a Democrat turned the typically red state of Texas blue. Ann Richards worked hard to champion for all of her constituents while she was in office and continued this fight even after she was out of office. In 2006, Ms. Richards passed away, but she will always be remembered for her kind heart and determined demeanor. She was an advocate for women everywhere. I want to make sure that her Texas memory is not forgotten.

Alongside Barbara Jordan and Ann Richards there are many Texas women that have

championed to represent strong, Texas women. Throughout Texas, there are women that have paved their individual paths independently and with dignity. Texas Railroad Commissioner Lena Guerrero was also a Hispanic legend in Texas. She was the youngest ever President of the Young Democrats of Texas at 21 years of age and was elected as a state representative in 1984. She was the first Hispanic and first woman on the Texas Railroad commission. Tragically, Lena met her demise at the age of 50. However, in her short time, Lena was someone to be admired and who made many contributions as a Texas citizen.

Dr. Polly Turner, an Associate Professor of Health Administration at Texas Southern University is another outstanding woman I would like to direct attention to. In 2007, she was awarded the Outstanding Texan Honoree in Education by State Representative Garnet Coleman.

Vanessa Diane Gilmore is a judge on the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas. She was appointed to this position by President Clinton in 1994. At that time, she was the youngest sitting federal judge in the United States. She was also the first graduate of the University of Houston to be appointed to the federal bench.

Hazel Hainsworth Young is another Texan deserving of our respect. In 1926, Hazel Young was named the first Latin teacher at the brand-new Jack Yates High School. In 2008, HISD honored Ms. Young and her contributions as a teacher at her 103rd birthday.

I would also like to direct attention to Faye B. Bryant, the 21st International President of Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) Sorority, Inc. Faye

B. Bryant was born in Houston in 1957. Since then, Ms. Bryant has worked as a teacher and administrator of Houston Independent School District (HISD). Along with her education focus, she stayed a strong supporter of her sorority, and as President of AKA, she has reached out to other nations and developed programs such as the African Village Development Program.

Mattelia B. Grays, the 18th International President of AKA, was also a native born Houstonian. After her education in Michigan and California, Ms. Grays returned to Houston to teach for public schools. Under her leadership the Rodgers Educational Enrichment Center was named one of "One of Six Super Schools" by Texas Monthly magazine. Like Ms. Bryant, Ms. Grays held positions of influence in HISD and championed for children's rights.

Aside the plethora of minority women that have made a name and established a foothold in the state of Texas, there are Caucasian women such as Patricia Lykos who is currently the District Attorney of Harris County. A graduate of the University of Houston and South Texas College of Law, Patricia has dedicated her career to the administration of justice. In 1980, she was the first Republican elected to the Harrison County criminal court bench.

Melissa Noriega is also a woman to be admired. She is a 27 year veteran of the HISD, a community activist, and a former member of the Texas House of representatives. Melissa's actions demonstrate her belief in public service and her ability to set aside her personal agendas for the greater good.

Furthermore, Rosanna Osterman was a Texas pioneer, American Civil War nurse and philanthropist. She lived in Galveston, and during the 1853 yellow fever epidemic, she erected a temporary hospital on her family premises in order to nurse the sick and the dying. Osterman also chose to stay in Galveston during the civil war and opened her home as a hospital, first to Union soldiers, then to Confederate soldiers.

I am proud to stand here today as a female member of Congress and champion for the unending fights for the rights and equality of women, and I am proud that I am able to bring recognition to these truly amazing women from Texas.

Women have a distinct place in American history as well as world history. Women had to fight uphill battles in order to free themselves from their cages. For example, women had to prove that intense physical or intellectual activity would not in fact be injurious to the "delicate" female biology, and to be seen as individuals and not property and objects of beauty.

As Susan B. Anthony said "It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed the Union" and "There never will be complete equality until women themselves help to make laws and elect law-makers". Women face discrimination and prejudice everyday, yet women all over the world continue to work hard to make a difference—to alter their lives and the lives of others. I believe that women have always had the power to change the world and we will. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.